

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 34 and 36 to 39 as follows. The claims, as pending in the subject application read as follows:

1. to 33. (Cancelled)

34. (Currently Amended) A data input apparatus comprising:

first input means for inputting data from an internal unit;

second input means for inputting secret key information from an external device, wherein the external device is portable and interfaces with the internal unit;

generating means for generating a digital signature using said data and said secret key information; and

outputting means for outputting said digital signature to said external device.

35. (Cancelled)

36. (Currently Amended) A data input method comprising:

inputting data from an internal unit via a first input means;

inputting secret key information from an external device via a second input means, wherein the external device is portable and interfaces with the internal unit;

generating a digital signature using said data and said secret key information; and

outputting said digital signature to said external device.

37. (Currently Amended) Computer-executable program code stored on a computer readable medium, said computer-executable program code for use in inputting data in a computer system, the computer-executable program code comprising:

code to input data from an internal unit via a first input means;

code to input secret key information from an external device via a second input means, wherein the external device is portable and interfaces with the internal unit;

code to generate a digital signature using said data and said secret key information; and

code to output said digital signature to said external device.

38. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable memory medium in which computer-executable process steps are stored, the process steps for inputting data, wherein the process steps comprise:

a first inputting step for inputting data from an internal unit via a first input means;

a second inputting step for inputting secret key information from an external device via a second input means, wherein the external device is portable and interfaces with the internal unit;

a generating step for generating a digital signature using said data and said secret key information; and

an outputting step for outputting said digital signature to said external device.

39. (Currently Amended) A data input system comprising:

first input means for inputting data from an internal unit;

compressor means for compressing the data;

second input means for inputting secret key information stored in an external device, wherein the external device is portable and interfaces with the internal unit;

generating means for generating a digital signature using the compressed data and the secret key information;

first outputting means for outputting the digital signature to the external device; and

second output means for outputting the input data.